

the sun is always shining when i'm with you

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It began when it started to rain.

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Chapter 1

The first time she entered the store was when it was raining way too hard to be possible and she was miles away from home.

Ryuko had burst in and slammed the door close to prevent the strong winds from blowing the store away into Narnia or some shit. The raven-haired girl slumped down against the door and sighed in relief; the weather forecast had said *nothing* about a storm. More reason for her to sue them in some distant world.

Straightening from her position, Ryuko shoved her hands in her jacket pockets and looked at her surroundings. It was a flower shop, she noted dully, and quite old at that, too. A cobweb hung from a corner on the ceiling.

It was also rather small and cramped, with most of the displays taking up space. At the far end of the store was the counter, a young woman sitting behind it. At the sight of Ryuko's presence, though, she abruptly stood up, the stool screeching behind her.

"Welcome," the woman breathed, long hair brushed behind her shoulders. "Is there anything you need?"

"Shelter," Ryuko said bluntly. She gestured at the raging storm behind her. "It's hell out there. Sorry to bother."

A flicker of disappointment flashed through the woman's face before she nodded and sat back down. "I see. Take your time."

Ryuko strode over to a small chair just in front of the counter and plopped down on it, letting out another sigh. Silence pervaded the small store for a few seconds until Ryuko's immediate boredom got to her.

"So, this place old?" She asked.

The woman's eyes darted over to her; it was then that Ryuko noticed she was reading a rather thick book. "Quite."

"Get any customers?"

"... Not often. You're the first person to come by this month."

It was October 12. Ryuko winced internally; that must be lonely.
"Sorry."

"It's alright."

To Ryuko's fortune, the storm dwindled down into a light drizzle in another ten minutes, allowing her to escape the silence of the store. She raised a hand in goodbye to the woman and headed towards the glass doors.

On the glass, she blinked. The woman's face was clearly reflected on the clear glass doors. Another blink. She looked... sad.

Ryuko turned around, gaze fixed firmly on the floor, grabbed a random flower, and asked for the price. She glanced up just enough to see the woman's delighted expression and the tag on her blouse; Satsuki.

Nice name. Ryuko got herself a flower and once she got home, she placed it in a vase.

The second time she entered the store was when Nui was looking for her and unlike the kindergarten days of hide-and-seek, this one was a life threatening situation.

She slammed the doors shut as soon as she got in, a sense of deja-vu apparent in the back of her mind. From the corner of her eye, she

saw Satsuki glance up hopefully, then her thick brows furrowing with confusion at the sight of the vaguely familiar girl.

"Uh, hi," Ryuko greeted awkwardly. "I'm hiding from someone. Uh, can I stay behind the counter? If a blondie with giant hair comes by, tell her you don't know me." Without waiting for an affirmative, Ryuko ducked behind the counter and squatted into a sitting position on the tiled floor.

Satsuki didn't say anything, just a quizzical glance down at the raven-haired girl, than a small shrug, and the woman redirected her gaze back to her book.

Despite Ryuko's prayers, the doors did open with a swing. Blonde hair peeked out from Ryuko's point of view. She crossed her fingers, bit her lip hard enough to draw blood, and prayed once more.

"Sis! Did someone in a red scarf come by?" Nui's unmistakeable voice chirped. "She's five foot two and has a red streak in her hair." Ryuko could just *hear* the sadistic grin creeping in Nui's voice. And, wait - sis?

One second. Two seconds. Three seconds. Then, "She was headed right of here. Couldn't have gone far. Now get out, Nui."

A giggle. "You're no *fuuun*, sis. Well, byeee! Thanks veeery much. Have a niiice day, Satsu-oneechan!"

The doors swung shut. Ryuko let out a breath she didn't know she had been holding. She remained hidden for another minute until, "She's gone. It's safe now."

Ryuko straightened, her legs aching from having been stuck in a painful position for such a long time. "Thanks."

"Anytime." Satsuki's gaze went back to her book. "Why was she looking for you?"

"She went batshit insane when I rejected her and brought out a knife. A fuckin' *knife* ." Ryuko shivered. "Would've died if I hadn't gotten the fuck away from her. She's your sister?"

"Adoptive, unfortunately." Satsuki frowned. "At least I'm not biologically related to her. Sometimes I have to sleep overnight in here to stay away from her."

"Ugh, sounds bad. Sorry." Ryuko fingered the hem of the navy blue skirt she wore. "Thanks again. I'd be dead right now if you hadn't been here."

"..." It could have just been Ryuko's imagination, but she swore red had dusted her cheeks at that moment. "You're quite welcome."

Ryuko bought another flower - the same one, too. She placed it in the vase next to her first one.

The third time she entered the store was when she felt genuine curiosity for the woman behind the counter. So she entered the store with the decision to chat her up.

Then stopped cold. Behind the counter, beside Satsuki, stood a very familiar blonde.

A grin spread over Nui's face. A feeling of death washed over Ryuko. Satsuki's face was stoic as ever, but there was the unmistakable glint of guilt in her eyes.

"Ryuko-chan!" Jumping up from the counter, Nui wrapped her arms around the girl's body, pressing her face way too close to Ryuko's. "Did you miss me? I know I did..."

"Get away from me," Ryuko snarled, shoving Nui away from her. "Why the hell are you here anyway?!"

"Sis lied to me," Nui responded, her voice going monotonous, and that was never good. Ryuko knew that all too well. "She told me you were outside. But you were here. Right here. So *close* . So I..." A wicked grin. "*Punished* her."

Ryuko's eyes flitted to Satsuki. "You hurt her because of *me* ? Are you *fucking* with me?"

"I will be soon." Nui licked her lips.

Ryuko almost gagged. Making a disgusted face over at the blonde, she wrenched herself free from Nui's grip (which was an achievement in itself) and rushed over to Satsuki. The woman's stoic composure had cracked, and the hand she rested on the opened book on her lap was trembling horribly.

"Satsuki!" Ryuko blurted out, not caring if Satsuki had never actually told her her name. "What'd she do to you?!"

"..." Satsuki pointedly averted her gaze from the raven-haired girl. "Nothing."

"Like hell she did nothing!" Ryuko shouted, completely ignoring Nui by now. The blonde stood behind the two of them, cocking her head to the side slightly in bemusement. "You think I don't see that? And that? And - Jesus fuck!"

A bruise on her cheek, a burn on her arm, and a stab wound on her other arm. Satsuki jerked free from Ryuko's touch, backing away slowly until her back was against the wall. "Don't touch me," she whispered, barely audible from Nui's giggling in the background.

"So? So? What d'you think of my art? I did those *a////* on my own!" Another sadistic grin sprang up on the blonde's face. "The best part is that I've done worse."

"You *bitch!* " Ryuko shouted. Before she (or Satsuki) could stop herself, she flew towards Nui, fist connecting with her face. Nui

screamed, then suddenly erupted into a bout of laughter. Nose bleeding, the blonde slinked back to the door, holding her purple eyepatch in place.

"Nice hit!" She cackled. "I guess I'll let you get away. For now. I'll always come back for you, after all, *Ryuko-chan*."

The door swung shut with a soft thud. Satsuki fell back onto her chair, clutching her book like it was the only thing keeping her alive. Ryuko let her arm drop down to her side, glaring at the door so heatedly Satsuki was afraid it would burn.

Without warning, Ryuko's personality did a complete 180, swerving around to face Satsuki once again. "Seriously, what'd she do to you? She's a fucking sicko, I *know* she could have done worse if she wanted to..."

"I'm *fine*, R-" Satsuki's eyes widened, before she quickly closed her mouth. "... I'm fine."

"You're not," Ryuko said flatly. Her face took on a concerned look, then, with all the caution she could possibly muster, she tentatively took Satsuki's trembling hand into her own, rubbing gentle patterns on her palm. Satsuki's breath hitched, and her shivering intensified. Ryuko knew it wasn't from the cold.

"..." The woman's gaze flickered to Ryuko's clear blue eyes, her vision blurring just the slightest. "Thank... you..."

"Yeah..."

Ryuko bought another flower to cheer her up. It was the same kind.

Ryuko started coming over every other day. When one or the other wasn't present in the flower shop, their world felt like it had stumbled

to a stop.

Ryuko bought flowers everyday. She made sure it was always the same kind. A plan was already forming in her mind about how to use those flowers, and she could already tell Satsuki would *love* it.

At least, she hoped so. Ryuko hoped that just this one time, her plan would work out.

It did.

Ryuko bound every single one of the flowers she bought - they were *daffodil* flowers oh my *God*, Ryuko screamed mentally as she looked up the meaning of a daffodil flower online - in a bouquet, making sure that the very first one she had bought (yes, she could quite tell the difference) was right in the middle.

She then presented the bouquet to Satsuki, blushing profusely as she stammered out a "W-W-WILL YOU GO OUT WITH ME?!" And Satsuki had sat there, stunned, with her book closed on her lap, a flush of blood creeping up her face.

Satsuki nodded. Ryuko nearly screamed in delight and threw the bouquet on the counter before wrapping her arms around Satsuki and burying her face in the crook of her neck, whispering thank-yous.

She laughed - Ryuko so did love it when Satsuki laughed - and pressed a fleeting kiss to Ryuko's cheek. Ryuko decided that one little kiss wasn't enough, and mashed her lips on Satsuki's. Their noses bumped, foreheads against each other, Satsuki's hand coming to rest on the raven-haired girl's chin -

Ryuko wished air wasn't such a necessity.

When Ryuko exited the flower shop, she sneaked a peek in the glass window. Satsuki was simply sitting there, before a bright blush crept over her face and she buried her nose back in her book.

It was upside down, Ryuko noted.